

## 9. *Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project*

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Section 15126.2(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describe any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented. In the case of the proposed project, implementation would involve construction and operation of the Puente Hills Intermodal Facility (PHIMF), an off-street (non-public) roadway, and improvements to the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way. The PHIMF, which is one component of the waste-by-rail system to the Mesquite Regional Landfill (MRL), is expected to begin operations in 2011/2012, with full project buildout anticipated in 2013. The following list describes the significant irreversible changes that would result from the proposed project:

- Construction of the PHIMF, off-street road, and improvements to the UPRR right-of-way would entail the commitment of nonrenewable energy resources and natural resources such as lumber, steel, copper, lead, other metals, sand and gravel, asphalt, and water.
- Construction of the PHIMF and off-street road would permanently replace the existing structures and operating business at the project site and study area. Commitment of the project site for operation of the PHIMF and off-street access road would result in a long-term irreversible commitment of the land, as it is improbable that the PHIMF project site and Parcel A would return to its original condition once it had been redeveloped.
- Construction and operation of the PHIMF would result in a long-term irreversible commitment of the land for an intermodal facility. Consequently, the project site would be the recipient of containerized municipal solid waste generated within the region for an indeterminate length of time.
- Construction of two additional staging and arrival/departure tracks would also result in a long-term irreversible commitment of the land as dedicated rail line within the UPRR right-of-way for use by the County Sanitation District No. 2 of Los Angeles County. It is improbable that the approximately 18,000 linear feet of improvements conducted within the UPRR right-of-way would revert back to their original (i.e., current) state as two operating main-line tracks, due to the large capital investment required for the improvements.
- Operation of the PHIMF would result in two additional daily trains (four additional train trips) on the 18-mile stretch of the UPRR main line between the PHIMF and the Pomona Switch. Operation of the additional trains would require a commitment by the UPRR to provide the capacity needed to serve the waste-by-rail system and would result in an increased commitment of public resources for track maintenance.



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